

**THE INLCUSION MODEL: LEADERS' PERCEPTION OF THE INCLUSION  
MODEL – A QUALITATIVE STUDY**

A Dissertation

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study is designed to further understand how leaders expand their leadership in an organization that is changing demographics. The purpose of this study will be used to build on the educational organizational design of the Inclusion Model research that is continuing to evolve at Texas A&M University. Findings from the previous studies designed by Dr. Jean A. Madsen and her research team are centered on four key areas of leadership. (1) The leader's ability to understand his or her own cultural identity; (2) the leader's ability to create organizational direction based on the needs of the changing diverse demographics; (3) the leader's ability to create integrated networks and interpersonal cooperation amongst the school participants; and finally (4) the leader's ability to establish organizational structures that meets the needs of a changing demographic.

Educational leaders in a district in Texas were interviewed with questions from the four key areas of leadership. Researchers used specific questions to understand how leaders adjust and adapt to provide an inclusive environment for organizations in which the student demographic is continuously changing. Answers were categorized into themes to develop a conclusion regarding leadership for inclusive organizations.

## **DEDICATION**

The journey is dedicated to all of the leaders that have given their life to the establishment of educational system that is focused on the positive development of ALL children. There are so many individuals that have taken the time to assist me in this journey that I could easily write another dissertation on all the positive spirits that have helped me. Yet, I want to dedicate this to the 3 most important ladies in my life. This is dedicated to my wife, Shantina R. Dixon who literally would not let me quit. She has not only been extremely supportive but extremely patient. Her continued intelligence, professional positive approach to everything is contagious and I thank God EVERY DAY that she is in my life and more importantly is staying in my life.

Next I want to dedicate this journey to my Mom, Eloise Doxie Dixon, who has dedicated her life to making sure her sons are strong African American men. It is not easy to raise two African American boys in New Orleans as a single mother but her faith in a higher power only proves the power of prayer and love. She has not only made a forever impression on us but also all of my closest friends as they can all distinctively remember how my Mom made a profound impact on what it means to be a positive man in your community.

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### **Contributors**

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The data analyzed for Chapter IV was provided by Professor Jean A. Madsen. All other work conducted for the dissertation was completed by the student independently.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### *Current State of Education in the United States*

Introduction: As the US government and the entire world continue to recover from one of the worst economic downturns, schools have had to adjust to radical, new environments that emphasize efficiency. In short, schools will have to continue to alter their standard mode of operations and prepare to work with more students and less resources. Financial constraints, in conjunction with the emergence of vouchers and charter schools will continue to change the traditional public educational system. Furthermore, the continuing growth of minority populations throughout the United States has a lasting impact on schools. In fact, the United States Census Bureau has released projections that predict by 2023 over half the children in America will be non-Anglo. Another example is the state of California. It is predicted that California will not have a single racial group that represents the majority. (Jackson, S.; May, K.; and Whitney, K. 1995.)

As the public school system continues to grow into a diverse combination of cultures and ethnicities, the emphasis on understanding how to meet the needs of students grows exponentially. Suburbs continue to experience sizable shifts in the percentage of minority students enrolled in suburban schools. There has been an increase of 82% over the past 20 years (Fry, 2009). Furthermore, the proportion of low-income students in suburban schools has nearly doubled in the past 35 years to the point

that there is as many low income children living in suburbs as in urban areas (Children's Defense Fund, 2010).

A study conducted by the United States Department of Education Office of Civil Rights explained in detail how the country was continuing to change. The research was specific to the rate of change in American public schools and the increasing level of minorities throughout the U.S. In addition, the report revealed how the educational profession is still maintaining a level of disparity with the level of educators in the public school system. "Using data collected by the Department as well as data from public school districts collected by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the report reviews trends in educator diversity and reveals that, while students of color make up 50% of students according to the CRDC, and are expected to make up 56% of the student population by 2024, the educator workforce is still overwhelmingly white." (United States, DOE, 06/2016).

Research conducted by Drier, Mollenkopf & Swanstrom (2004) explained how suburbs have experienced a sizable change. From the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to the 1990s, the suburbs and the school systems that served the suburbs were exclusively middle-class White families. As a result, the suburbs and suburban school systems, were used as a means for White middle-class families to insulate themselves and extract resources and opportunities for social networks amongst themselves (Rury & Saatcioglu, 2011). The recent addition of students who have not fallen into the traditional category of suburbanites has impacted the fabric of many suburban school districts.

The traditional public educational system continues to strive and meet the needs of new students entering the organization. Customized education and individualized educational plans for each student are future goals of schools but understanding how culture and beliefs affect current systems has become a core focus for researchers. Developing systems in which individuals within the workplace environment allow individuals to feel secure and accepted (Roberson, 2006; Sabharwal 2014) as an inclusive group is a continuous journey for researchers.

The changes in the demographics of students in schools have altered the planning practices for many educators. Nelson and Guerra (2014) discuss how many educators lack sufficient cultural knowledge in understanding intercultural dynamics in classroom settings and typically do not have access to professional development that helps them develop this knowledge. Unfortunately deficit beliefs are often reinforced through professional practice. Ferdman (2014) explains how leadership development is “a continuous process, designed to expand the capabilities, competencies, and awareness of individuals (leaders and followers), groups, and organizations toward attaining shared goals and objectives”. Therefore, if there is an insignificant emphasis on inclusion, the entire organization has the potential of having a deficit on meeting the needs of all individuals.

The reality of an ever-increasing minority population has substantial ramifications for leadership in schools. Suburban schools now house more than half of all racial and ethnic groups, and a growing proportion of low-income and linguistic minority families (Frey, 2011). Meeting the needs of a more diverse population in

American schools will involve a combination of leadership skills that emphasize data disaggregation and personnel development. “As organizations increasingly operate in a multinational and multicultural context, understanding how diversity in the composition of organizational groups affects outcomes such as satisfaction, creativity, and turnover will be of increasing importance”(Milliken & Martins 1996). Leaders will need strong competency in understanding organizational dynamics and to significantly integrate the needs (Cox, 1994).

Leadership continues to need individuals who are versed in understanding the ramifications and power that an effective, inclusive can bring to not only students but also the community. Schools that continue to have a changing demographics have the potential for conflict. An example in Bell’s (2002) study, conflict among heterogeneous groups of teachers occurred due to differences in instructional practices, discipline and multicultural emphasis.

A student population that is continuing to increase in diversity while a teaching profession that will remain majority White will challenge leaders to be creative and aggressive when implementing inclusive strategies for all stakeholders. Two recent studies share detailed examples of how well-intentioned educators often adopted superficial responses to the needs of the organizations changing demographics. (Holme et al. 2014). The research by Cooper (2009) and Evans (2007a, 2007b) were focused on the response of suburban school systems to demographic change.

Cooper’s (2009) study examined how two elementary schools that were changing demographics responded to the continual change. The study found that school leaders

engaged in efforts to superficially “celebrate” diversity but failed to challenge deficit mindsets of many faculty and parents (Holme et al. 2014). The study found that there was not enough attention given to the “social divisions, the hostility, and the discriminatory attitudes of teachers and parents in their schools” (pp. 716 -717)

The next study by Evans (2007a, 2007b) examined how three high schools in different districts responded to an increasing African American enrollment population. The researcher found that educators either adopted colorblind ideologies or developed a deficit-oriented framework to the new population of students. Furthermore Evans found that educators who did seek to challenge the deficit-oriented mindset were met with significant resistance by other educators within the school community.

Both studies were diligent in focusing on how schools have had to significantly adjust to new populations. There has been continuous work on implementing diversity in the work place but there has often been conflict with each research based practice. The challenges of inclusion involve “creating connections and practices that can work for everyone and allow everyone to work to their full potential” (Ferdman, 2014). Inclusive practices work to better indoctrinate all stakeholders in the organization. (Madsen, 2016)

Research has continued to produce numerous studies that showcase social inequities within diverse school environments as a result of demographic change or concerted policy efforts for change (Lewis, 2004; Wells & Serna, 1996, Wells, Holme, Revilla, & Atanda, 2009). Therefore, there is still a need to understand the ramifications of effective practices when the educational organizations are experiencing changing demographics.

Developing initiatives that work to address integrating cultures has been a priority with school districts. As changes continue to happen as a result of diversity, they prompt schools to examine topics such as race and gender. (Thomas, 2008) The continual implementation of diversity related programs has infiltrated the practice of leadership and development. The core focus of developing diversity management programs was to create environments that support the changing demographics. (Thomas,1990). Unfortunately, with every initiative that is suggested to move educational organizations to environments of understanding and inclusiveness, there is oftentimes resistance and conflict. Developing initiatives to reduce prejudice and discrimination are logical counter steps to help the organization move forward but are also met with resistance. (Thomas, 2008; Thomas; 2005).

Research has emphasized the importance that a leader must possess in order for effective inclusionary practices to be implemented in an educational organization. Two distinct approaches have developed when a leader is managing a school's changing demographics (Offerman & Basford, 2014). One approach is the ability of a leader to be equipped with a high level of cultural awareness and implement continual inclusionary skills that elevate the organization. The other approach is the implementation of programs that emphasize diversity and creating an inclusive environment.

Public schools have historically implemented programs and initiatives to meet the challenges of a changing organization. Developing steps that move from valuing diversity to taking on aggressive and active approaches to include accountability, family



friendly policies and promoting a heterogeneous mix of employees are factors for changing organizations (Pitts, 2006). In every phase leading up to segregation and the years after desegregation, public schools continue to address the critical needs of untraditional clients enrolling into the school system. The continual organizational feeling tone of us vs them and insider/outsider often leads to racial conflict (Madsen and Mabokela, 2005). Public schools continue to need policy and court decisions to help structure the multicultural environment.

Although the courts continue to shape the requirements for schools, the level of implementation for each mandate has differed. Ferdman (2014) has a simple notion to educational environments in that “the practice of inclusion is about both everyday behavior and organizational social systems”. The level of expertise to create an environment that meets the needs of all students continues to be an evolving science. Diversity management is oftentimes considered the first step for inclusion (Roberson, 2006). The next level of creating an inclusive environment involves the removal of barriers of hiring diversity of thought and the ability to hiring high performance from all people. (Pless and Mark, 2004).

Ferdman (2014) explains about four distinct challenges and paradoxes that are synonymous with the practice of inclusion. 1) The practice of inclusion is a daily event that must encompass everyday behavior and the entire organizational and social systems. 2) There is a need for inclusionary practices to be both structures and processes. 3) The practice involves comfort and discomfort and 4) the practice involves the power to drive practical benefits and about doing what is right and just.

The amount of cultural awareness that needs to be understood by each leader has significantly increased. Leadership in schools continues to transform into a skill that needs thorough understanding of inclusive schools. When organizations fail to support diverse employees, negative consequences manifest themselves in areas such as turnover, climate concerns and absenteeism (Madsen and Mabokela, 2005). The essential elements that are needed to meet the needs of a majority teaching staff and a continual changing student population is at the core of quality leadership.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

Recent research gathered by the Office of Civil Rights has exposed various aspects of the public educational system that are critical to the gross inequities amongst rich and poor and white students versus black and brown students. The 20 year study has confirmed that schools with a large statistical number of minorities or low socioeconomic population are more likely to have inexperienced teachers and inadequate funding supplies. The reality that schools are working towards the connection of standardized tests and teacher performance is more indication that an imbalance system may continue to foster inequities amongst the various cultures.

The implementation of various programs that are focused on reducing prejudice and discrimination has been a common reactive tool to address the continual changing demographics (Thomas, 2008). Numerous diversity management programs have been instrumental in helping educational organizations adjust to their new populations. Oftentimes these programs are fragmented and do not possess the ability to handle conflicts and other organizational problematic issues (Ely & Thomas 2001; Thomas

2008; Erlandson, 20; Madsen & Mabokela, 2015). Diversity management has a focus on areas such as recruitment, promotion and the retention of a diverse group of employees. Areas that could be easily observed become the desired tool to validate an effectively implemented diversity management system.

Characteristics such as gender, race, age and disability acceptance have become outward signals that a diversity plan is having an effect on an organizations. Effective plans have been able to quantify various levels of diversity initiatives based on external factors. Implementing effective inclusion with all stakeholders involves more than observable diversity initiatives. Inclusion involves a consistent, calculated effort that reaches far greater than outward signals.

The continual need to teach teachers and administrators effective cultural competencies continues to grow. “Educational leaders need better preparation and encouragement to be accountable for serving a diverse and changing public.” (Cooper, C. 2009). Higher educational institutions and districts across the country continue to work to develop effective courses and professional development opportunities for teachers to continue to meet the demands of teaching students of a minority background. In addition to cultural differences within educational organizations, there is the persistent difficult dynamic of educating students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

School cultures continue to have a disconnect to meet the needs of the growing minority population. Holme, Diem and Welton, (2014) explain how the changing demographics of suburban schools have been tasked with meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse population of students. Recent research provides clear evidence

that students who are in low social economic communities will continue to have schools with teachers who are limited with experience. The Office of Civil Rights reported that “10% of teachers in schools with high black and Latino student enrollment are in their first year of teaching, compared to 5% of teachers in schools with low black and Latino student enrollment”. Therefore, the need for leaders to address specific steps for inclusion is paramount for school success as the schools continue to experience change.

Organizational educational systems are forced to evolve into accommodating structures that must have an emphasis on inclusion and inclusionary strategies. Research continues to develop strategies that create work environments where diverse individuals feel included (Bilimoria, Joy & Liang, 2008; Roberson, 2006). The continual need for educational organizations to reflect on their practices has ample ramifications for the overall health of the organization.

Furthermore, the continual growth of minorities into traditional majority schools increases the need for inclusionary strategies. Although the emphasis will always be on the organizational health for students, there is also a great need to emphasize the health of teachers and administrators. The need to understand how the organization creates an environment that is inclusive to all teachers from various backgrounds and culture has a direct relationship on student success and positive outcomes.

### ***Significance of the problem***

The ability to manage diversity related initiatives has helped create awareness to systems that are not focused on all cultures and has helped develop a sense of responsibility in all stakeholders. However, the next level of developing inclusionary

practical attainable steps has been limited for leaders and educators on campuses. Schools have had substantial difficulty in creating atmospheres that equate their work with inclusive practices and defined outcomes. Developing a model and understanding the leaders' role in organizations that are changing demographics is essential.

Research has provided numerous frameworks for diversity management models for organizations. The continual need to develop inclusive strategies has helped research move into a direction that constructs equitable environments for all. However, most of the models that exist do not emphasize the various needs that are essential for schools.

Because educational organizations are filled with individuals from various backgrounds, the need for understanding a mixture of cultures by any leader is imperative to the overall success of the organization. Leaders are critical factors in establishing rapport between faculty and administration, thus creating a relationship that is essential to organizational success. Furthermore, research has documented sociological occurrences that are present as a result of the various differences that exist in any organizations.

Therefore, the leader becomes an essential component to the overall direction of the campus regarding the development of inclusionary practices. The capability of the leader to synthesize the current state of the organization and develop specific steps for the organization will become paramount to the overall capacity of the school.

Fundamentals regarding the implementation of inclusionary practices follow a variety of paths for effective realization. The leader's vision, combined with continual

steps for implementation and improvement are critical to the overall success of inclusion.

### ***Purpose of the Study***

This research will add to the body of research that is focused on the continual steps needed to create an inclusive educational organization. As schools continue to experience greater diversity on campuses, the essential need for leaders to address these concerns becomes vital. In addition, as American society continues to subject divisive and hateful rhetoric, the need for leadership to development environments that are inclusive is critical. Diversity literature has a strong emphasis on the importance a leader has in facilitating equitable treatment for all stakeholders. Unfortunately, there are few organizational inclusion models for schools.

Understanding how a leader interprets four key areas of leadership will continue to help the development of an inclusive environment. The leader's ability to understand his or her own cultural identity has the potential to have a profound effect on the organization. As organizations continue to address the need for substantial and impactful diversity management initiatives in order to create an environment that supports and retains a diverse work force, leaders need to have a strong understanding of their own cultural competence (Cox & Blake, 1991). Having a strong understanding of their own cultural competence is a crucial aspect to comprehending the definition of diversity. McGrath, Berdahl and Arrow (1995) define diversity as a characteristic of groups of two or more people with demographic differences of one sort or another among group members.

Starting with the definition of diversity as a construct that involves a difference, leaders are compelled to understand how the power of differences begins the process of understanding diversity self-efficacy. Researchers continue to develop an understanding of how intergroup differences affect an organization. Pelled (1996) predicted that racial diversity would inevitably incite intergroup bias and unfortunately lead to negative outcomes for work groups. This theory contradicts the various studies that involved the positive outcomes that are associated with intergroup contact.

Findings from the previous study designed by Dr. Jean A. Madsen are centered on four key areas of leadership. (1) The leader's ability to understand his or her own cultural identity; (2) the leader's ability to create organizational direction based on the needs of the changing diverse demographics; (3) the leader's ability to create integrated networks and interpersonal cooperation amongst the school participants; and finally (4) the leader's ability to establish organizational structures that meets the needs of a changing demographic.

There has been a substantial emphasis on how principals must focus on self-awareness and cultural implications in order to meet the demands of a school that is changing demographics (Terrell & Lindsey, 2008). Research has traditionally emphasized certain steps that each leader must follow in order to meet the needs of their new school climate. The emphasis falls on the leader to understand cultural differences but there is a limited research on how the principal addresses organizational issues that occurred because of group difference. (Madsen, 2013). A "culturally proficient" leader has a focus on the assessment of their cultural knowledge, the management and

adaptation to the dynamics of diversity and encouraging the learning about other groups (Terrell & Lindsey, 2008).

Educational organizations that are continuously changing demographics have a variety of factors that are embedded within the organization. A leaders' capacity is to balance the current situation but plan for the inevitable changes. Organizations that experience gradual shifts in demographics have a model of balancing traditional values with meeting the needs of incoming populations.

The balance involves continual professional development for all stakeholders, a shift in focusing on hiring individuals with experience in diverse settings and plan of action to engage parents in their new environment. Each of these stages has value and a strong element of essentials in order for an organization to develop an inclusive atmosphere.

### ***Professional Development***

"Leadership is about vision" and it takes a leader to not only research where the organization is going but also develop a plan as to how the organization is going to accept the new direction. Oftentimes professional development for educators involves current trends for effective learning but organizations that are experiencing changing demographics must also develop attainable action steps for all stakeholders in order to help ease the transition of new cultures in the environment.

A leader has to focus on current trends but also balance preparation and fear for the unknown. Educational organizations have had a continual difficult time with educating students in a setting in which minority students are the majority. In addition,



educational organizations continue to have difficult times eliminating the achievement gap when children of color are the minority. So a leader that is aware of the educational challenges and is aware that the organization is going to receive more minority students, a plan of action on educating and preparing the educational environment becomes essential.

One of the most effective tools that an educational leader can use is the ability to prepare effective professional development for the staff. The professional development must balance proven research, attainable action steps and motivation in order to facilitate successful implementation. Furthermore, stakeholders in an educational environment need to feel comfortable approaching leaders when professional development is performed in order to further learning of the concepts.

### ***Hiring Experience***

Research has provided a variety of answers in helping to understand how diversity affects an organization. On one hand there is a strong consideration for the positive effectiveness of diversity in the workplace. Numerous studies have proven that groups that are composed of members with unlike characteristics including ethnicity (Ling, 1990), sex (Hoffman, Harburg, & Maier, 1962) and attitudes (Triandis, Hall, & Ewen, 1965) outperformed groups of homogeneous members in terms of solution quality (Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1992).

Yet, there are research findings that differ with organizations having a strong focus on diversity and bringing in different cultures. Numerous corporations and

employment agencies continue to struggle with understanding the benefit of recruiting and retaining a strong, diverse organization, especially in leadership roles.

This will be an in-depth qualitative study that will examine how leaders in one school district understand their role as leaders in developing or maintaining an educational environment that is inclusive. Leaders were asked specific questions based on categories that focus on inclusive schools. Codes and themes were developed from the answers submitted by the interviewees.

### ***Significance of the Study***

### ***Hypothesis/Research Question***

As research continues to learn more about the challenges that are associated with leading schools that are changing demographics, it is imperative that specific steps are developed to aid leaders in creating inclusive schools. This research study is designed to provide continual understanding in order to answer the question regarding effective leadership in inclusive schools. Participants from a school district in central, southern Texas were interviewed to develop an understanding of their perceptions of the four areas of leadership that are key in an inclusive school environment.

Researchers developed questions based on the Inclusion Model in order to understand how leaders' perceptions are placed into practice. Leaders were selected and interviewed by a group of researchers in order to understand leaders' perception of implementing key components of the Inclusion Model and how their practice can adapt in an educational organization. The interviews were recorded and themes emerged from the participants answers. This study is part of a larger study that is examining all aspects

of educational organizations which include responses from teachers, parents, fellow administrators and students.

### ***Overview of the Methodology***

This qualitative case study was part of a larger study examining how leaders in educational organizations perceive their leadership practice in environments that have changed demographics or are experiencing changing demographics. (Madsen, 2015). Trends in enrollment, demographics, poverty rates were derived from various data points that included US Census and TEA calculated data. The rationale for selecting a single case study was chosen because it facilitates an examination of the relationship between local context and the area of interest (Yin, 2008). Specifically, leaders were asked questions in order to develop an understanding of their perception of their practice in environments that were different demographically then their expectation. A purposive sampling strategy (Yin, 2011) was used in order to seek interview respondents who were knowledgeable about the school system, policies and district leadership strategies. Each of the participants that were selected was specifically chosen because of their role in the district and possible influence in an educational environment. A purposive sampling technique, snowball sampling, was used to select the sample from which the most can be learned (Merriam, 1998).

This study is related to a larger study that is sponsored by Kellogg's Educational Grant. The purpose of the larger study is to understand how to effectively implement and understand the Inclusion Scale Model. The larger study is focused on examining all stakeholders in an educational organization (administrators, teachers, parents and

students). The criteria used to select the leaders in this study was based on their position, tenure in the district, availability and experience as an educational leader. The district that was selected has experienced a shift in demographics and is now homogenous with the leaders composing of different ethnicities.

### ***Data Collection***

Group interviews were conducted with each principal. Two professors and two graduate students were included in the group interviews. Principals were asked a variety of questions that were designed to solicit how leaders perceived their action when implementing specific steps to develop an inclusive educational environment. Principal interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed to be analyzed for recurring themes (Seidman, 2006; Spradley, 1980). The goal of this qualitative case study was to follow Yin (1993) assertion that qualitative case study research is not about statistical generalization. Rather the goal in this case study was to examine the leaders perceptions and the factors that have shaped their response and relate this information to the greater study.

The interview protocol was developed collaboratively through the larger study. The goal was to obtain information from respondents regarding demographic shifts and their role and responsibility in creating an inclusive environment. The purpose was to understand how respondents perceived their leadership skills when components of the Inclusion Scale Model were being implemented in order to create an inclusive environment. Each interviewee was asked to participate in at least one interview which

lasted approximately 1 hour in length. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim.

### ***Data Analysis and Interpretation***

A qualitative thematic strategy of data analysis, based on Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant comparative approach, was used to categorize and make judgments about the meaning of the data (Boyatzis, 1998). The coding process was based on the larger study examining the Inclusion Scale Model and findings that leaders experience when demographics are shifting. Through this process of coding and creating categories, themes or patterns that describe and organize the data were identified to illustrate how leaders perceived their actions when implementing various components of the Inclusionary Scale Model. After completing the data analysis, generalizations were developed based on the themes. These generalizations were then compared and contrasted to the Inclusionary Scale Model and effective strategies that research has categorized as meaningful and impactful in an organization that is inclusive.

Several techniques were used to increase the probability of producing credible findings and interpretations from the study (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). First, there was the coding of interviews within case themes, then for cross-case themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Themes were clustered in multiple ways based by the role of the administrator, gender, levels of understanding of components of the Inclusion Scale Model. The findings were checked and rechecked for both confirming and disconfirming evidence (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In order to alleviate discrepancies that developed within the analysis, interviews were reread and

checked against the coded data to confirm that the interpretation was consistent and valid and not overreaching.

### ***Overview of the Conceptual Framework***

This dissertation builds on recent findings from a larger study that is examining the effectiveness of the Inclusionary Scale Model. The findings from this study will add to understanding of leader's perception of their practice in an organization that has experienced a change in demographics. The Inclusionary Scale Model will be used to investigate how principals acquire and contextualize leadership components that are embedded in the model.

The Inclusion Model contains three major components that provide guidance for organizations. The Inclusion Model was designed to assess the impact educational leaders develop when an educational organization is changing demographics. The research was funded by Kellogg's Educational Program and conducted by the Educational Human Resource and Development Center (EHRD) at Texas A&M University. As a result of qualitative case studies and theoretical comparisons, a model emerged that showed a continual process that is developed for leaders while an organization is experiencing demographic changes. The model, represented in Figure 1, provided the conceptual framework for the present study. The model depicted three levels of application that are imperative for practitioners in changing environments.

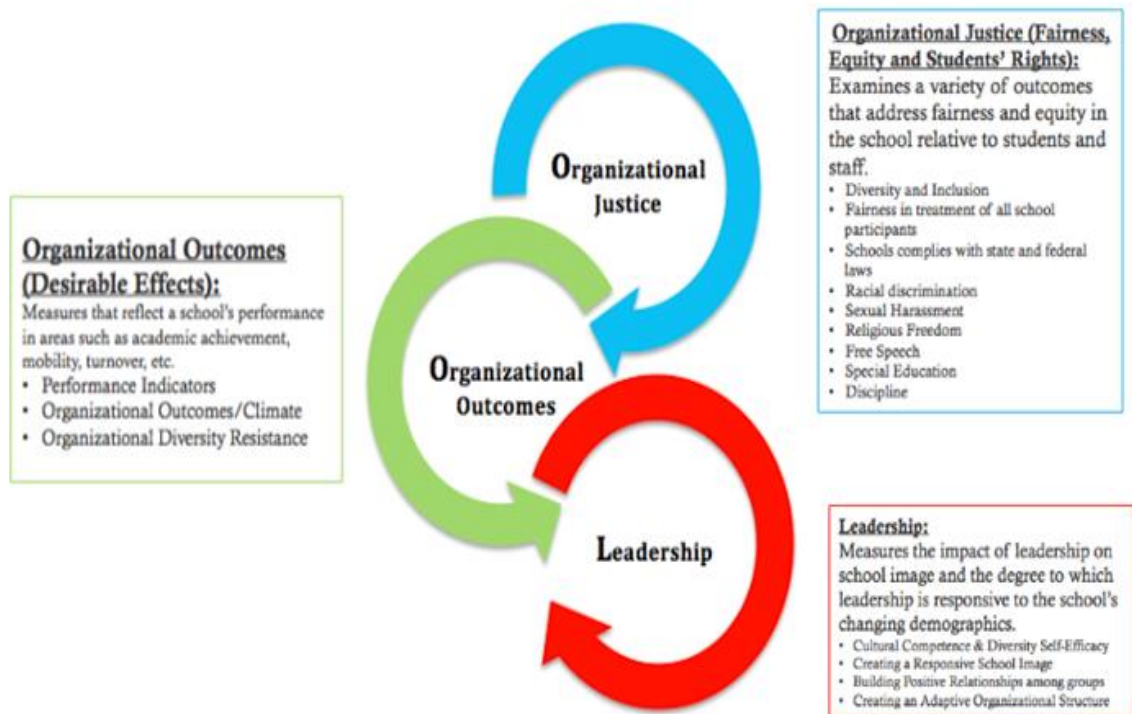


Figure 1. Madsen's (2017) Inclusion Model for educational organizations.

### **Leadership**

Components of the leadership construct in the inclusionary scale model compose of qualities that are essential for leaders to respond to changing demographics.

To give greater detail to the findings that led to the validation of the inclusionary scale model, each area of the model is discussed in more detail. The next portion of this chapter will examine the inclusionary scale model and how leaders were able to validate the significance or show examples where greater emphasis could be interjected into the educational organizations.

The leadership aspect of the inclusion model details four key components to measure how a leader impacts an organization. 1) Cultural competence and Diversity

Self-Efficacy 2) Creating a Responsive school Image 3) Building Positive Relationships among groups 4) Creating an Adaptive Organizational Structure. Each aspect will be thoroughly discussed in chapter four.

### ***Organizational Outcomes***

The Inclusion Model is specific with a focus on the type of organizational outcomes that are imperative for an educational organization that is considered inclusive. The next component on the Inclusionary Scale Model focuses on organizational performance and outcomes. Organizational outcomes are a critical portion of the inclusionary scale model that follows limited existing research linking performance and inclusive organizations (Shore et. al. 2010). Research has emphasized that employees who have a social integration into the organization will have more of a connection and will feel accepted (Avery, McKay, Wilson, & Tonidandel, 2007). The outcomes can be related to the individual or the work group. The individual outcomes involve turnover, satisfaction, commitment, motivation and trust and the work group outcomes involve effectiveness and cohesiveness of the organization. (Hayes, Bartle, Major, 2002).

Outcomes for an educational organization include but are not limited to academic achievement, performance indicators, mobility, teacher turnover and overall climate feeling tones. The Inclusion Model looks for outcomes that focus on practices that enhance inclusion and promote conflict resolution (Madsen, 2016). In addition, organizational outcomes provide insights toward the degrees in which an organization is responsive to changing demographics.



Organizational outcomes in the inclusion model have an additional focus on teachers' resistance to diversity training and other key professional developments that enhance inclusion. The need for continual learning for educators in an organization that is changing demographics increases to meet the needs of not only students but also their families. The organizational outcomes analyze the demeanor and feeling tone of the teachers and other educational support staff. (Madsen, 2016)

### ***Organizational Justice***

Organizational justice was added to the inclusion model as a result of the necessity to interpret aspects of equity within the organizations. The historic legal components of schools have placed a substantial amount of emphasis on a continuing need to meet the needs of all stakeholders. The lens to examine whether practices or traditions are fair is essential to the organizations' capacity to meet the needs of all students. There is a wide array of interpretation of policy and the application of law that organizations adhere too in order to accept changes in power distribution (Weick & McDaniel, 1989).

Schools have continual mandates to comply and meet federal, state and local laws. Including organizational justice in the inclusion model outlines the framework in which administrators must adhere to ensure compliance. Schools have historically been dependent on rituals and routines to satisfy their legal environment (Meyer, 1986). Educational organizations ability to continually meet the laws and guidelines involve adaptation and meeting the needs of all stakeholders.

Schools that are changing demographics have to maintain the same standard of legal compliance oftentimes with fewer resources. Organizational justice attempts to examine how school participants make sense of the rules and policies. Unfortunately, organizations often lack a sufficient framework to make sense of the rules that are transpiring within (Weick, 1995). The idea of analyzing the various rights that are embedded in all organizations such as teachers' rights, racial discrimination, sexual harassment, religious freedom and coercion, basic and cyber speech is embedded in organizational justice.

Finally, organizational justice is included in the model because of the wide capacity of school districts to interpret various laws and policy that affect changes with power distribution through fairness and equity. Including a diverse array of values for individuals in an organization increases complications (Hayes et al, 2002). Therefore, including organizational justice allows for the analysis of school participants ability to interpret policies in ways that are assumed fair and equitable (Madsen, 2016).

### ***Limitations of the Study***

There are several limitations to the present study. The first limitation involved the small sample size of the educational leaders that were selected for this portion of the larger study. The size of the school district and the availability of principals to participate in the study had a direct influence on the amount of participants who were able to meet with researchers. The small sample of principals limits the ability to generalize the findings to all principals. The information will be used as a part of a larger study.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

A review of the literature was completed to obtain a general understanding of the present level of research concerning two major topics. One topic of focus was the use of inclusion for organizational change. The next topic of focus was the role a principal has on an educational organization. After a review of the literature concerning these topics, a theoretical framework was developed for this study in order to summarize the essential effectiveness of both entities on the success of a school.

Using the inclusion school model as a standard theoretical framework, the purpose of this study was to understand how principals adjust their leadership to organizations that are experiencing changing demographics. A team of researchers have developed a critical inclusion theoretical model to examine how leaders adjust their leadership capacity while schools are changing demographics. A survey was developed and focus groups were established in order to understand how principals perceived their organization and developed action steps to address the changing environment.

Understanding educational organizational change involves the conceptualizations of how organizations include growing cultures into the environment. The chapter will first examine research on inclusion and the theoretical model that was developed by researchers at Texas A&M. The next part of the chapter will focus on principal leadership and the impact the role of the principal has on an organization.

### ***Inclusion in Educational Organizations***

A great deal of research has focused on how diversity affects the workplace but only recently has there been a focus on inclusion. (Shore, L., Randel, A, Chung, B., Dean, M., Ehrhart, K., Singh, G., 2010). The diversity field of literature has evolved and scholars have increasingly focused on ways in which diversity can enhance an organization and promote the value in diversity (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009; Homan, Hollenbeck, Humphrey, van Knippenberg, Ilgen, @ Van Kleef, 2008). Yet, there has been an underlining focus on “problems” associated with diversity, such as discrimination, bias, affirmative action, and tokenism (Shore et al., 2009)

Diversity has been traditionally affected by the continual increase in immigrants to America. Educational institutions have had to compensate also with the increased immigrants into school districts across the United States. Educational systems have had to adapt to serve these growing populations (Capps et al., 2005; Lowenhaupt, 2014, Lowenhaupt & Reeves, 2015). The need to evolve the systems is difficult because of the lack of experience and expertise to move programs and resources to meet the needs of the newcomers (Capps et al., 2005; Quinones-Benitez, 2003; Wortham et al., 2002, Lowerhaupt & Reeves, 2015). Race is an embedded fabric in the culture of the United States. (Chapter 7- Carson, 1997). “Racial boundaries, erected over hundreds of years, have become deeply embedded in the social and psychological makeup of all Americans”. (Carson, 1997)

A study by Lowenhaupt and Reeves, 2015 discussed the recent enrollment of immigrants in public schools that have not traditionally had a population of immigrants. (Capps et al., 2005; Marrow, 2005). The study explains how school capacity is highly affected with current immigration patterns. (Lowenhaupt & Marrow, 2015). The level of adjustment or change as a result of increased immigration is examined using the establish definitions of capacity in education. Using an empirical study of schools serving the new Latino diaspora in Wisconsin (Lowenhaupt, 2014), the research was able to examine how capacity affects instructional and organizational design (p. 309) Schools The stages of impact on schools that are experiencing an influx of new cultures into the organization are widely discussed and the continual increase

One study conducted by Kraft, Matthew; Papay, John; Johnson, Susan; Charner-Laird, Megin; Ng, Monica & Reinhorn, Stephanie (2015) discussed characteristics of how organizations develop systems to help teachers who have students that are facing high-poverty.

### ***Moving from Diversity to Inclusion***

Research has continued to examine and reexamine the effectiveness of diversity in organizational change. Yet there is a decisive level of understanding how diversity management is a precursor for inclusion (Roberson 2006). Diversity management has focused on creating environments that focused on supporting demographic changes (Thomas, 1990). The organization would develop audits and analyze practices that contributed or negatively impacted the organizational environment.

Organizations that have desired to manage diversity have followed similar steps in the implementation of the process. Companies focus on accountability, family friendly policies and a focus on the power of a heterogeneous mix of employees (Pitts, 2006). Diversity management has a core focus on aspects that are visible and quantifiable.

Organizations have developed programs and trainings that have had an emphasis on recruitment efforts and cultural awareness (Madsen and Mabokela, 2016). The ability for an organization to compare how it has added different ethnic groups and cultures have helped shape diversity management techniques. Understanding how each of these groups coexists in the environment was not the emphasis, rather the goal was to increase the level of differences within the organization. The policies of the diversity management were focused on the characteristics of gender, race, disability and age. (Madsen and Mabokela, 2016)

The concept of contact from various cultures has been studied to expand the theory of diverse organizations and the impact on the organization. In Pettigrew (2002) work on intergroup contact, he explains when ‘multicultural education is combined with optimal intergroup contact, its advantages are greatly enhanced’ (pg. 770). Research has provided a vast array of studies that have explored the blending and combining of cultures and examined the effectiveness of these interactions.

One of the groundbreaking studies is Allport (1954) work *The Nature of Prejudice*. His initial study allowed researchers to examine the concept of contact theory and the ‘positive factors’ approach. “Reduced prejudice will result when four positive

features of the contact situation are present: equal status of the groups in the situation, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and the support of authorities, law, or custom”.

Researchers developed examples and scenarios that helped validate Allport’s theory.

However, problems also emerged as time continued and more research showcased weaknesses in some of the aspects of the theory. Pettigrew, (1998)

developed four questions that researchers have had to work to try and answer:

- 1) Does contact reduce prejudice, or does prejudice reduce contact?
- 2) The theory risks being an open-ended, ever expanding list of necessary positive conditions
- 3) It also says little about processes by which contact leads to changed attitudes and behavior
- 4) Does the theory specify how contact’s effects will generalize beyond the immediate situation?

Research has evolved to establish organizational norms that move into understanding how contact with various cultures help establish greater success. The notion of intergroup theory became significant in understanding how leaders in organizations adapt to various cultures. “Intergroup theory posits a complex set of relations to understand the effects of diversity of identities in the workplace (Alderfer and Smith, 1982).

Organizations are comprised of two groups – identity groups and organization groups (Alderfer and Smith, 1982). The two groups have a distinct characteristic when they enter an environment. An organizational group is a group in which members share common organizational positions, participate in common work experiences and have similar organizational views (Alderfer and Smith 1982, Nkomo and Cox, 1996)

An identity group is one that have common biological characteristics; participate in similar historically experiences and at times are subject to certain social forces

(Alderfer & Smith, 1982; Nkomo & Cox, 1996; Madsen & Mabokela, 2002). All individuals entering an organization will bring in their identity group. The identity groups are based on variables such as ethnicity, sex, age, and family background (Madsen & Mabokela, 2002). Individuals may have choices regarding their identity group but external individuals in the organization have preconceived notions and beliefs about individuals who are entering in the organization.

One of the reoccurring problems with Allport's original contact theory is that contact alone is not a transfer to positive. Emphasizing that all individuals have attitudes towards other ethnicities, there is a notion that training and positive guidance will always be a need. Isrel, Ben-Ari and Amir (1986) "hold that positive effects will not occur if the groups' initial attitudes toward each other are too negative". This is where the leadership component in an organization becomes an essential attribute to the success of the organization. Cook (1978) explains how the out-group that is peering into the new group must have characteristics that disconfirm their negative stereotypes before positive effects will occur.

As research continued to understand how diversity positively or negatively affected an organization, scholars worked to comprehend how the effects diversity contributed to educational organizations. Numerous scholars started to examine the role white teachers have in a diverse educational environment.

The continual development of how different cultures affect the learning of the child became a constant topic of understanding and research. Geneva work on



multiculturalism in the classroom has had ground breaking impact on establishing an understanding of how the differences in culture affect the educational environment.

Research continues to work to explain how the various cultures in an organization affect the entire organization. Numerous business models have explained significant dynamics that affect how multicultural environments are enhanced or destroyed when multicultural environments are not nourished.

These models have significance but do not have the factors of white teachers and minority students as a critical piece of engagement for success. The constructs of relating the importance of a teacher to the overall learning of any student has been categorized and documented as the single most important aspect for a child's academic success. Relating how the racial relationships in multicultural environments impacts learning has continued to be a forefront in educational research.

Developing an organization that is inclusive has a far reaching focus that contextualizes the views and attitudes of the organization. Researchers have developed various models that go beyond traditional diversity management. Moving towards hiring diversity of thought and enabling high performance from all people has been a core focus in developing inclusion models (Pless and Mark, 2004)

With such a strong imprint in the design of the American culture, it is critical to develop a key understanding of how race transcends influence on leadership action and inclusive designs. The next body of research we will focus on is the increasing development of inclusive organizations for all stakeholders. As America continues to move into a community that educates numerous cultures in schools, it is imperative to

understand the complexity of creating and maintaining an organizational environment that welcomes all students. Examining the current research on inclusive educational organizations will help establish a conceptual definition to this research. Furthermore, how the principal affects the organizations will help shape the

### ***Part II The Principal as the Leader***

Research has developed countless studies on the effectiveness of the principal in an educational organization. Qualitative and quantitative studies continue to document the power a leader exemplifies in an educational setting.

The purpose of this literature review is to narrow the sources of information to specifically discuss the research that centers around leaders in diverse environments. As the United States of America continues to expand and countless individuals continue to immigrate into America, the need to understand effective leadership in diverse context becomes essential.

One of the key distinctions that need to be established is the accurate definition of a diverse educational environment. After segregation that was mandatory busing to integrate all public schools (quote and the legal date and time needed). In the early 80's, minority populations began to move into suburban neighborhoods that were predominantly white. Communities would experience a gradual growth of minority students. In the 90's and to the present there is a constant movement of gradual growth of minority students into predominantly white neighborhoods. In fact Frey, 2011 explains how suburbs that were once overwhelmingly White and middle-class are now home to a majority of African American and Hispanics. Nearly one third of all low-

income individuals (Kneebone & Garr, 2010) and more than half of the nation's foreign born residents reside in suburban neighborhoods (Frey, Berube, Singer, Holme et al & Wilson, 2009).

Fortunately, research has continued to explain and share examples of effective leadership in schools that are experiencing changing demographics. Researchers have all agreed that the principals' actions, attitudes, collaborative behaviors and communication all have an impact on the culture and the performance of the buildings they lead (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Short & Greer, 2002; Sparks, 2002). Therefore leaders have a critical role in the effective transition of educational organizations that move from majority white to an increase in minorities.

Principal leadership is grounded with the realization of multiple aspects of the organization that need constant attention and decision making components. The level of communication that is needed involves systemic and critical analysis of where the organization is headed and where the organization is presently sitting. The balance is essential. Louis Seashore (2008) argued that change occurs in the form of small-scale increments and mostly in the form of adjustments to stimuli by organizational members. Adjusting to the whole organization while balancing the few steps that are presently needed is a constant challenge. The role of the principal is critical to the overall feeling tone of the environment.

In Cormier (2003) work, the author explained how the principal's continual presence and continual ability to communicate was essential with the organization

understanding the vision and mission of the campus. The principal has a direct correlation with the overall feeling tone to the campus.

A key article that helped scholars understand how group-produced outcomes are established was documented by Williams and Reilly (1998) such as problem solving and capacity of a group to function

Leadership research has continued to explain the influence a principal possesses in controlling the environment of an educational organization. Whether the principal's role as instructional leader, disciplinarian, hiring manager or community representative, there is always a level of effective leadership that is synonymous with successful schools. There continues to be an enormous amount of research that is produced with the intention of understanding effective leadership.

The focus of this literary research is to focus on the body of research that has an emphasis on principal leadership standards that emphasize the cultural competence of leaders. Understanding how a leader possesses many of the passive bias and stereotypes that all individuals bring with them in an organization. Effective leadership has been researched to include a high level of personal understanding of each individual and what they bring into the organization. Cox (1993) explain about the relationships that each member brings into a group and how organizations share various groups within the organization.

The effectiveness of leadership continues to also rest on the ability of the leader to educate and grow regarding their personal biases and how this inspires action or limits action toward other stakeholders in the organization. The leader becomes a focal point

in developing and nurturing that is receptive to the various cultures and outlooks in the room. The need for leadership to continue to expand and understand how this affects the organization has been critical in truly comprehending how an inclusive environment benefits all individuals

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### *Description of the Data Sources*

The purpose of this study is to understand the strategies that principals develop and administer during demographic changes. The study involved principals from a district in Texas who were experiencing changes to their demographics or were hired in new positions that had a different set of demographics than their previous school. This chapter will explain the research methodology applied in the study.

The chapter will start with an explanation of the research perspective followed by a brief description of the data sources. A review of the previous study that researchers at Texas A&M are completing will give detail in the rationale for why some participants were selected. The next part of the chapter will describe methods used in the data management, data collection and data analysis. The end of the chapter will discuss the procedures that were used to develop and establish trustworthiness of the findings.

Researchers continue to examine the level of expertise that is needed as organizations change demographics. Moving from diversity management is a process that involves continual reflection and awareness. Prior research has developed four key components that are essential with an inclusive school. a) A leader needs to have a level of cultural competence and understanding how the levels of diversity within an organization interplay with each other; b) creating a responsive school image within the community and how this image relates to the participants within the organization c)

building positive relationships amongst the groups within the organization and d) creating an adaptive organizational structure.

The study used a variety of questions to address all four areas in order to develop subthemes that were highlighted in the answers of the participants. Understanding how leaders continue to develop inclusive strategies within their organization were the guidelines for the researchers. The study was an extension of a three year study that examined leaders and teachers in a district in Texas. The study was a continuation of interviewing leaders who were recently placed in the district or were moved to a new campus.

Researchers from Texas A&M developed an Inclusionary Model that pushes for greater strategies for stakeholders. The model is a push to not only move forward past diversity initiatives but continue to increase organizational justice and performance. This study was a continuation of understanding how leaders become aware of their perspective and how this relates to strategies that are implemented within the system. The inclusion model is developed to capture the organizational emphasis where diversity falls short. Understanding how these leaders attempted or fell short of implementing effective inclusionary strategies is at the root of this study.

The use of case study research was an appropriate methodology for explaining the how or why of a social phenomenon (Yin, 2009). Research that uses case study techniques offer the researcher the ability to examine the in-depth details of a real-life experience. Yin offers the explanation that case study methodology gives greater clarification when a how or why question is being asked. In the present study, the intent

was to explain how principals adjust their leadership skills to an educational organization that is changing demographics or they are in a new environment that has different demographics than they were previously immersed in.

Furthermore, Merriam (1998) discussed the focus on a particular phenomenon in a case study and how this will help reveal specific qualities in the research. Using Stake (1995) as a basis to understand how cases selected for study are embedded in a bounded system if (a) there are time and place boundaries to the cases, and (b) the cases have interrelated parts that form a whole. The occurrence studied in this research is focused on the principals' action steps when school demographics are changing or are different than the principal's previous environment. The cases selected were bounded by the inclusionary scale model that researchers have developed and are studying the effectiveness within the school.

Another characteristic of case study research is the ability to provide a rich, thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the phenomenon being studied. Merriam (1998) describes how a rich, thick description portrays in detail the participants and the setting of the study. In the present study, principals were selected based on their experience, grade level in which they were leaders and

### ***Description of the data sources***

Principals were interviewed based on their availability and their role within the school district. Two of the principals were new to the district. New is defined as 2 years of less. Each principal had previous experience as an administrator before their current role in the district.



Principals interviewed individually with a group of researchers asking pertinent questions about their leadership and understanding of inclusive practices. Leaders were allowed to answer questions based on their experience and answers were recorded and later transcribed to develop recurring themes.

### ***Data collection and Data analysis***

The study was a qualitative study that used a case study as a means to collect and analyze data. Using Yin (2009) as a basis to explain the rationale for using a case study as an appropriate methodology involves understanding how a case study allows the researcher to understand in-depth details of a real-life experiences. Yin explains how case study methodology is superior when questions of how or why are used to comprehend a contemporary set of events that the investigator has little or no control. In this study, the intent was to understand how leaders used various strategies that have been outlined in the Inclusion Model.

Yin (2009) further explains that a case study is used to explore and complete real-life experiences with in-depth details. Using a case study strategy is appropriate when there is a bounded system that has one or more cases within it (Creswell, 2007).

Another key characteristic of using a case study is the opportunity for the study to provide a rich, thick description of the concept that is being studied (Geertz, 1973). A thick, rich description allows the findings to be transferable from the present study to other settings based on characteristics that are similar (Creswell, 2007). For example, the present study provides detail answers on how leaders reflect on their practice using an inclusionary model as the theoretical framework. The participants' ability to give

examples and descriptions of experiences offer viewpoints that are critical in understanding how inclusion can benefit or disrupt an organizational setting. Therefore, a rich thick description offers an understanding that goes deeper than numerical data (Merriam, 1998).

Finally, case studies can expose new understanding, confirm what is known or broaden previous, accepted understanding. According to Merriam (1998) case studies are considered experimental and have the potential to shed light on the understanding of the object of study in several ways.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULTS**

This chapter presents the results regarding principals' perceptions of their leadership as it relates to the inclusionary school scale model. As previously discussed in Chapter I, the Inclusionary Scale Model is designed to facilitate and comprehend an educational organizations adaptation to changing demographics. The model has three components that are fluid and founded on principals of inclusionary practices. The three components are organizational justice, organizational outcomes and leadership. The first component focuses on organizational justice.

#### ***Organizational Justice***

Organizational justice was added to the inclusion model as a result of the necessity to interpret aspects of equity within the organizations. The historic legal components of schools have placed a substantial amount of emphasis on a continuing need to meet the needs of all stakeholders. The lens to examine whether practices or traditions are fair is essential to the organizations' capacity to meet the needs of all students. There is a wide array of interpretation of policy and the application of law that organizations adhere too in order to accept changes in power distribution (Weick & McDaniel, 1989).

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Finally, organizational justice is included in the model because of the wide capacity of school districts to interpret various laws and policy that affect changes with power distribution through fairness and equity. Including a diverse array of values for individuals in an organization increases complications (Hayes et al, 2002). Therefore, including organizational justice allows for the analysis of school participants ability to interpret policies in ways that are assumed fair and equitable (Madsen, 2016).

### ***Organizational Outcomes***

The next component on the Inclusionary Scale Model focuses on organizational performance and outcomes. Organizational outcomes are a critical portion of the inclusionary scale model that follows limited existing research linking performance and inclusive organizations (Shore et. al. 2010). Research has emphasized that employees who have a social integration into the organization will have more of a connection and

will feel accepted (Avery, McKay, Wilson, & Tonidandel, 2007). The outcomes can be related to the individual or the work group. The individual outcomes involve turnover, satisfaction, commitment, motivation and trust and the work group outcomes involve effectiveness and cohesiveness of the organization. (Hayes, Bartle, Major, 2002).

Outcomes for an educational organization include but are not limited to academic achievement, performance indicators, mobility, teacher turnover and overall climate feeling tones. The Inclusion Model looks for outcomes that focus on practices that enhance inclusion and promote conflict resolution (Madsen, 2016). In addition, organizational outcomes provide insights toward the degrees in which an organization is responsive to changing demographics.

Organizational outcomes in the inclusion model have an additional focus on teachers' resistance to diversity training and other key professional developments that enhance inclusion. The need for continual learning for educators in an organization that is changing demographics increases to meet the needs of not only students but also their families. The organizational outcomes analyze the demeanor and feeling tone of the teachers and other educational support staff.

### ***Leadership***

The final piece of the organization is leadership. This study will focus on the leadership portion of the Inclusionary Scale Model and examine sub themes that were mentioned throughout the qualitative study. The leader's perceptions were highlighted and thoroughly studied to understand how they worked to establish an inclusive environment. The leadership components of the Inclusion Model include four

components that will be used to understand leaders' perceptions of their actions and leadership in educational organizations.

### ***Overview of the Results***

The purpose of this study is to understand leaders' perceptions of the inclusion model. Principals were asked a variety of questions to understand how they develop strategies that are specific with the theoretical finding of an inclusionary school model scale. Questions were developed based on four strategic themes that are essential regarding the leadership inclusionary scale model: 1) cultural competence & diversity self-efficacy 2) creating a responsive school image 3) building positive relationships among groups 4) creating an adaptive organizational structure.

As stated in chapter 1, the theoretical development of the inclusion model is dependent on the leadership of the school. The subthemes that were discussed in chapter 1 were also validated in this study. In addition, this study highlighted additional subthemes under the four strategic themes in an inclusionary scale model.

To give greater detail to the findings that led to the validation of the inclusionary scale model, each area of the model is discussed in more detail. The next portion of this chapter will examine the inclusionary scale model and how leaders were able to validate the significance or show examples where greater emphasis could be interjected into the educational organizations.

### ***Cultural Competence & Diversity Self-efficacy***

As organizations continue to experience high levels of demographic shifts, leaders are in need of continual steps to create cultures within the organization that are

beneficial to the health of the system. As researchers have discussed, “along with cultural competence and efficacy, leaders must be equally aware of the manner in which their personality and beliefs impact diverse contexts” (Madsen and Mabokela 2015). In order to have an effective, inclusive organization, the leader has to have a level of balance in understanding their beliefs and group identity and how does this effect an organization. In addition, the leader has to be aware of how members in the organization balance their beliefs.

Cultural competence is rooted in the historical experiences that individuals encounter throughout life. Combs (2002) explains the various sources of self-efficacy information. There are three sources of information that are used to master diversity self-efficacy. Enactive mastery, vicarious experiences and verbal persuasion have pertinent means with the development of self-efficacy. Administrators need to have both an understanding of cultural competence and a degree of efficacy to address conflicts that are rooted in diversity and changing demographics (Madsen, 2016)

This study attempted to understand the level of understanding that principals possessed regarding key leadership components of the inclusionary scale model. The responses that leaders provided exemplified a limited understanding of the depth of cultural competence. There were similar sub themes that developed from the interviews but the level of understanding was limited to relative basic understanding of the concept.

For example, one of the subthemes that emerged from this study under the context of cultural competence and diversity self-efficacy was the need for administrators to be reflective in understanding the various cultures that exists within the

organization. Combs (2002) writes how diversity self-efficacy encompasses an element of self-awareness about one's own belief about diversity. In order to understand 'one's own belief' there needs to be a level of reflection not only about the clients within the organization but also the individual's identity. One of the leaders' responded to a question with a level of understanding regarding the linguistic differences between the cultures.

“if I want to be Hispanic and speak Spanish, I feel like the bond that I would make would be a lot quicker”

The leader continued to explain her philosophy regarding her ability to reflect on her identity and

how it relates to the individuals within the organization:

“yes they are gonna resist and push me a little more because they don't know who I am or what 'am about (because) I am so completely different from them... but once we get past the initial like, yes I am different... once we get past that.... Then 'am just as effective as any other....”

While the leader developed a key sense of understanding the need to 'get pass the initial differences', there was a limited understanding of how her culture promotes or hinders an inclusive environment. Are the 'differences' that were expressed by the leader rooted only in language? or are there other historical and economic experiences that have help develop those differences? Research has explained how organizations that do not address the needs of demographically diverse constituencies will oftentimes experience emotional conflict, diminished group cohesiveness, absenteeism and turnover (Thomas, 2008; Herring, 2009; Madsen, 2016).



At the core of the school inclusion model is the leaders' ability to understand culture competence and how cultures impact performance within the organization (Bennett, 2014). Having the wherewithal to know the strengths and weakness of preconceived notions has a profound effect on the necessary actions that not only the organizations need to take, but the leaders within the organization.

One of the male principals explained how he had to become aware of his demographics at his new school and the differences from his last assignment. He was quoted as saying

“where I came from there was a pretty even mix of Hispanics and Whites and African Americans, so I would say it's a little different here with the overwhelming majority, Hispanic students.”

This quote has an impact on confirming the importance of a leader having a sense of awareness regarding the demographics within the organization. “With regard to leadership skill development, administrators should have both an understanding of cultural competence and a degree of efficacy to address diversity related conflicts occurring due to changing demographics” (Madsen, 2016). However, the second part of the quote is just as important to the overall understanding of cultural competence. Having an awareness of the different ethnicities in the organization is important but the leader did not expound on how he has a role with his ethnicity to create an environment where all students are welcome. Addressing diversity related conflicts that occur in an educational organization are important in the aspect of cultural competence. (Madsen, 2016).

The leader's initial understanding of his experience regarding environments that contain a diverse student population versus a homogenous student population is the first level of awareness regarding cultural competence. While it can be argued that the administrator displayed a level of awareness that is noteworthy, the degree could be argued as superficial at best.

To create a relational inclusive leadership in an organization, the central focus is within the individuals and the groups (Booyesen, 2014; Bricksen, 2000). The principal had an awareness of similarities but was limited in creating interpersonal attachments. As Bricksen (2000) explains, without a strong relational orientation, individuals are not motivated to ensure the benefits of others.

A key component to understanding the organizational environment, is to be aware of the differences that are within the organizational environment.

One of the leaders explained how they examined numerous means when developing an understanding of their demographics. The female middle school principal explained

“we have a lot of teachers who are from the ‘area’ and so just letting students know that... you know... your goals are attainable air goals and there are people who are from the same situation as you are that have achieved their goals and that... that makes a big impression on them”

The desire to use racial affiliation as a key motivating factor was significant to understanding the needs of the organization. Because race in the United States is “relations existing between peoples distinguished by marks of racial descent...” (Park, 1999), a leader's ability to be aware of the races in the educational organization has merit to aide with the inclusion scale.

Developing an understanding of the present environment is crucial to the next level of comprehending biases that are embedded within the leader. “Along with cultural competence and efficacy, leaders must be equally aware of the manner in which their personality and beliefs impact diverse context” (Madsen, 2016). An effective leader has to understand the process of realizing how their experiences have helped shape their attitudes and beliefs about different cultures. Using Davide Goldberg’s 1994 definition of racial knowledge as a starting point to understand how biases develop.

“Racial knowledge is defined by a dual movement. It is dependent upon – it appropriates as its own mode of expression, its premises, and the limits of its determinations – those of established fields of the day, especially anthropology, natural history and biology.

While experiences are the baseline to help develop preconceived thoughts about race, the level to internalize and verbalize their biases helps solidify attainable action steps. For example one of the male principals discussed his experience as an administrator in another district.

“I think coming from another school district, where I guess I had been so blessed is because I did have Hispanics and whites but I mean I had Hispanics that didn’t speak English and Hispanics that did, then I had my cowboy like black students and inner city black students and I had my white country students and my live-in-a-trailer park white students. I had a mix and if I am going to be effective you know based of my skin color, the one that that I found was I was consistent with what I expected from everyone”

The leader was clear in his assessment of the environment that he was previously immersed versus his new environment. While his initial analysis may have been immersed with generalizations and stereotypes, this is still beneficial to the concept of a leader understanding their biases and how the preconceived knowledge is crucial to an

inclusionary scale. Individuals that enter organizations bring their identity group into the organization and their identity group is based on variables such as ethnicity, sex, age, and family background. (Madson and Mabokelay, 2002)

The principal discussed other issues that he noticed coming into the environment that had an influence on his development of internalizing his biases.

“The kids were like where are you from, you have an accent and so it was kind of like.... Yeah, I’m definitely the outsider”

Cox (1994) explains how the more familiar a leader is with the cultural and language differences the better they will be able to develop different approaches to tasks. If the means is to develop an environment that prioritizes an inclusive culture, a key step is the ability for the leader to interpret this very concept of language and a feeling of being an outsider.

There is a need and a high level of leadership to imbed this knowledge into the fabric of the organization that will start the process of bringing groups together.

Mentoring and having a significant role in the development of groups to help build an inclusive environment takes a high level of understanding. This is the third subtheme that was developed through this study. The leaders continual need to have an effective mentoring component for teachers and students and using the cultural competence as a means to attempt to establish an inclusive environment.

The leader has a significant role in balancing not only their established balances but taking an initiative to understand the dynamics of the individuals within the organization. Leaders must encourage participants to remain firm and not forget who they are once they enter the workplace (Gallegos, 2014). The leader has a pivotal role in

carrying out diversity-related initiatives (Madsen, 2016) which often include mentoring. As described in the study, leaders felt the need to mentor teachers, regardless of their ethnicity or cultural background.

One principal is quoted as saying “with the correct support. They became strong. It didn’t matter... The race didn’t matter”. A profound quote that coincides with the research that examines identity groups and organizational groups within an educational institution. An organizational group is one in which members share common organizational positions, participate in common work experiences, and have similar organizational views (Alderfer and Smith 1982, Nkomo and Cox 1996). The principal and the teacher were not in common organizational positions but both parties had common work experiences.

### ***Creating a Responsive School Image***

Another key area that leaders must attend to is the overall school image as the organization experiences shifting demographics. Leaders continually need to address perceptions of the school as an inclusive organization that welcomes a variety of individuals. Responding to the various needs of the community, specifically parent perception is critical in shaping the organizational image. One of Chemers (2000) key concepts is the belief that a leader’s image and how people perceive the organization as responsive to their individual needs is critical when leading demographically diverse groups.

One of the subthemes that emerged from this study involved the leaders’ continual conception of what actions were needed in order to develop an inclusive image

of the campus. All of the participants in the study were aware of the need to bring parents into the school and welcome them into the environment. As one leader explained, “we have dinner for you just to have welcoming opportunities for the parents to come to the school”. The leader went further to explain the goal was to develop relationships so “they (parents) don’t feel defensive coming to the school to hear something negative about their child”.

Research explains how it is important for leaders to understand their organization and establish an internal identity which impacts how exchanges will be perceived among all stakeholders. (Madsen, 2016) The leaders in this study had an awareness of the image based on various observations. One leader explained her perception

“Parent involvement is low but some of that has to do with the mentality of the family but some of that is the schools fault. The middle school’s fault and just relying on old habits. We have to create the times and things like that for families to come in.

Developing a positive image in the school is highly dependent on the interactions with outsiders in the community. Leaders must have a clear understanding of how their school image is important and how the image will attract and retain parents of color (Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000). The leaders in this study emphasized the lack of support and were aware that participation needed to increase but were unable to explain an initiative to help curve their observations. One leader emphasized how

“letters go home and we get a very low response rate back. When we have parent activities, its always the same parents that attend or respond to those events”.

Schools that are experiencing changing demographics have the continual challenge of meeting the needs of all stakeholders during the shift. The school's image and how the organizational identity is developed becomes an expression of values which can be fluid (Madsen, 2016). Leaders have to prepare the teachers and all stakeholders using effective professional development that has an emphasis on meeting the needs of families of color. Another subtheme that emerged was the leaders' capacity to explain some of the professional development activities that the school developed in order to meet the needs of the changing demographics.

One leader gave examples of how the campus did not have professional development before he arrived. "PD was non-existent here and when I actually walked in, I had to create the professional development sessions." The leaders however were limited in moving forward with professional development activities that emphasized many of the cultural sensitive topics that are needed to develop a concrete plan of action for a positive image.

The leaders had an emphasis on effective positive behavior intervention systems which are critical to organizations but oftentimes do not move an organization further with meeting the needs of the various cultures in an organization. The leaders showed examples of positive behavior intervention systems (PBIS) for students and teachers.

One leader went on to explain the name of their team:

"We have started what we call a SILK team; a campus instructional leadership team that consists of assistant principals and teachers that help see really good instruction."

The leader shared an example of bringing individuals together within the group, there was still a low level of focus on overall professional development to assist with

bringing various individuals together. Developing relationships, especially professional development strategies that emphasize relational identity amongst stakeholders has a profound effect on the image of the organization. Brickson (2000) and Booysen (2014) explain how leaders who create a relational identity orientation in the organization help individuals see themselves as partners in unique relationships.

One leader discussed a method to try and foster more involvement with the outside community. The leader explained how she “wanted to give more parent involvement, having little coffee chats and work on developing a booster because we do not have a PTA here.” Although this is an initiative that will assist with relationships, the focus of creating a responsive is deeper and more complex. Leaders in organizations that are continuing to

### ***Building Positive Relationships among Groups***

Research has provided continual research on the importance of organizations to provide environments that are strategic with building relationships with all groups within the organization. The leader has a critical role in establishing relationships among demographically diverse members and diffusing diversity related conflicts (Madsen, 2016). One key component that diversity literature reveals is the importance of the leader to understand the importance of cultural identities of their followers. Developing a strong sense of identity orientation that promotes a high level of relational perspectives is paramount for quality interactions with coworkers (Brickson, 2000).

The administrators in this study shared ideas and attempts to build relationships with the community and various groups within the educational organizations. One



leader explained how the school changed parent conferences in order to build a positive relationship with more parents

“We do home visits and we do a lot of proactive staffing so we get all the teachers together and we bring the parents in to make it more convenient for parents. So instead of scheduling individual parent conferences with the teachers we bring all of the teachers together at once so that the parents are not having to make multiple trips to the school.”

Developing a system or attempting to alter the system in order to accommodate parents of the school is a strong attempt to build positive relationships. Brickson (2000) explains how the contextualization of the organization and its structure will activate a particular work situation. The leader in this study shared how the parents and the teachers needed a new system in order to facilitate better communication with parents and teachers.

Research also explains how the leader must have self-knowledge about their own identity orientation and how this relates to other groups in the organization. The leaders in this study did not discuss the differences in their identity as compared to the relationship of parents. Chemers (2000) believes that leaders must accurately assess differences among groups; it is these group differences that may impact organizational outcomes. The leaders in this study discussed professional development opportunities but did not share using the various groups within the organization to build and share ideas to foster stronger relationships.

Leaders that are experiencing changing demographics must facilitate positive relationships among demographic diverse groups to insure followers closely identify with each other to support collective improvements (Madsen, 2016). The leaders

explained desires to work as a unit in order to try and build strong relationships amongst each other and with the community. One principal explained:

It was building that communication with them (parents), you know a lot of them had never really had the communication. They (parents) said no one ever really came in to us and talked to us. So it was building that, it was constantly every single day.

The leader shared the need to work with the parental groups that dropped students off at school as a means to build and foster a more positive relationship with parents. Although this is always an effective attempt to work with a particular group in an educational organization, it does not provide the level of intensity that research describes as essential when building positive relationships among groups. The leaders never discussed how their own identity orientation manifest in building or hindering group dynamics. Brickson (2000) explains how one's identity orientation is related to the type of self-knowledge and how it relates to others and their group prototypes.

The leaders were somewhat limited in understanding the power of developing groups that promote an "other" and create interpersonal attachments. (Madsen, 2016). The leaders did not discuss their role in creating groups that help individuals understand their effective, positive influence in not only the group but the benefit of others. Booyesen, (2014) and Bricksen, (2000) discuss how leaders who have relational inclusive leadership focus on building relationships with individuals and groups.

### ***Creating an Adaptive Organizational Structure***

One of the more complex themes that developed in this study was the ability for the leaders to discuss how they worked to create an adaptive organizational structure. Developing an organizational structure involves the administrators ability to have a

flexible environment that expands and evolves as diverse participants enter their schools (Madsen, 2016). Organizations that are highly structured will result in a culture that is inflexible (Scott & Lane, 2000). The goal of this portion of the study was to understand how leaders develop and maintain an adaptive organizational structure within their educational environment.

One leader discussed a technique in which the campus worked to ensure individuals were aware of the campus culture:

“as soon as they start on campus we pair them with mentor teachers and we make sure to give them those opportunities where we have them see socially the most challenging students in different situations”

Administrators in organizations that are experiencing changing demographics have to have a strong understanding of group dynamics. Chemers (1995) discusses how diverse organizations have implications for group dynamics and group decisions. Leaders in diverse organizations have structures that include participatory processes where school teams have a high level of power distribution. Another leader discussed their method to help new individuals:

“we do a really good job during our recruitment process to make sure what is going on in the classroom is closely aligned to our vision for our campus”

Research explains how important it is for a leader to structure the organization and define teams in the organization with the awareness and strategic designs of groups and relational identity. Relational orientation in organizations that are changing demographics involve decision making by leaders that are aware and cognizant of

numerous factors. Leaders need to have a strong understanding of the needs of various stakeholders in order to facilitate various groups and maximize their potential.

Although the leader discussed having a level of competence regarding a desire for new individuals coming into the organization, the leader did not move into the group dynamics of the organization. Creating an adaptive structure involves a leader balancing the components of creating relationships and focusing on tasks to be accomplished (Madsen, 2016). One administrator explained how he felt good about his present state of teachers.

“We’ve got teachers that through coaching and through what we’re doing just needing their eyes open (they) are going to be really effective in the classroom.”

While this quote is a testament to the importance of collaboration and goal setting, it does not share the responsibility and task of developing a group based on the diversity of the individuals involved. An adaptive organization is one that establishes a culture that supports different values. In order to support the different values, the concept of understanding and analyzing the differences within the context of the organization is critical. Leadership in diverse context involves quite a bit of balancing and structuring in an organization that is changing demographics.

Within the context of organizations that are in need of flexibility as a result of changing demographics, leaders are crucial in making decisions regarding their organization. The ability to design the campus to allow decisions to be adjusted is paramount in organizations that are changing. Research discusses how leaders need to have an environment that allows for feedback and communication from all stakeholders.

than the principal's previous environment. The cases selected were bounded by the inclusionary scale model that researchers have developed and are studying the effectiveness within the school.

Another characteristic of case study research is the ability to provide a rich, thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the phenomenon being studied. Merriam (1998) describes how a rich, thick description portrays in detail the participants and the setting of the study. In the present study, principals were selected based on their experience, grade level in which they were leaders and

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss future ramifications as a result of this study. Without question, race and education will continue to be present in American culture. As America continues to mold into an inclusive society, the growing pains of finding environments that respect cultures and uphold traditional values will constantly challenge educators.

This case study research was designed to understand leaders' perceptions of the Inclusion Model. Educational organizations continue to experience vast changes in the composition of schools due to socio economics and race. The challenge that educators will continue to face is to understand and adjust to change when organizations are changing demographics. Furthermore, the role of the leader to manage and motivate individuals in the organization as change occurs is critical to the overall success of the school.

The Inclusion Model was developed to strategically categorize the leadership capacity in relationship to exterior and interior changing dynamics in an educational organization.. The three components were designed to understand how a leader develops strategies and makes significant changes within the organization in order to adapt to the new clientele within the school. Organizational Justice, Organizational Outcomes and Leadership create a construct for leaders to follow and categorize while organizations are changing demographics.

This present study built on findings from prior and current research on the Inclusion Model by investigating further how principals interpret and adapt to organizations that are experiencing significant changes from demographic shifts. The data were analyzed using the Leadership components of the Inclusion Model for contextualization and application of the conceptual framework. The Leadership concept in the Inclusion Model focused on the leaders' capacity to manage and lead aspects of the school while the campus was changing demographics. The four components that have

As explained in this research, leaders of educational organizations have a critical role in the overall perception and feeling tone of the environment. Conversations about race and challenges to human biases are only starting places for environments to develop into inclusive organizations. Attainable action steps that are consistent and purposeful truly have the most dedicated impacts.

This study has revealed 3 significant themes in which leaders of schools that are changing demographics need to place into the toolbox for effective steps to success. The focus and dedication of the leader is paramount to the overall feeling tone of the environment. Leadership involves a constant level of evolution that challenges the traditional roles and invokes new steps to meet the needs of all students.

The three themes that were developed were a) the need for leaders to have a strong focus on their present cultural competence, b) the continual need for leaders to promote organizational justice and c) the capacity for leaders to maintain a continual focus on building a responsive school image.

As leadership continues to evolve, the ability for systems to develop a means to understand the interactions between cultures becomes an essential function for the success of the organization. Leadership will continue to need a fundamental focus on relationships between teachers, students and parents entering into the organization. Understanding the stages throughout these relationships will be critical for the overall success of the leader and ultimately the image and climate of the school.

### **Summary of Findings**

This study helped further the research for administrators understanding of the Inclusion Model, specifically the components on leadership. As research continues to understand how an inclusive organization affects learning and the community, it will be important that scholars encourage and develop key action steps that leaders need to adhere too. One of the key components that can be used is understanding how power PD has a role to assist leaders who come into the environment with passive bias or worse significant discrimination problems.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study is limited in its data sources and context. Data was collected from a small number of principals as a means to continue the overall study of the Inclusion Model. The actual collection of data was limited to a small percentage of schools in the district. The small quantity therefore, limited the generalizability of the findings to all principals. The concept of generalizability continues to be debated amongst numerous researchers. For instance, Merriam (1998) explains how concepts that are learned in one particular situation can indeed be transferred to similar situations that are encountered



later. Other notable scholars have suggested that qualitative research findings offer a “working hypothesis” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.122).

In addition, as a practitioner who has experienced changing demographics, the lens in which leadership is view can limit the full image of what is taking place. The experience that this researcher has lived, oftentimes gives a bias to the administrators because of all of the ramifications that it takes to be an effective leader. As a result, the interpretation of the data may have been skewed to limit other problematic answers or themes that may have been developed throughout the course of the study.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study focused on leader’s perception of the Inclusion Model. Leaders were asked a series of questions about their practice and specific themes were developed as a result of their answers. A better understanding of leaders actions in schools that are changing demographics can lead to more effective steps for leaders to diffuse conflict and increase positive involvement by all stakeholders. While findings from the present study did validate the effective use of the Inclusion Model, there are several areas that can be added for future research.

First, the Inclusion Model and the questions that were developed to understand the leadership capacity will need to be tested in other varied contexts. The Inclusion Model should be tested in urban settings that are continuing to have a shift with demographics. There is also a need to test the Inclusion Model in suburban and rural settings that are experiencing an increase in Hispanic populations.

Expanding the leadership components of the Inclusion Model will involve greater examination of how leaders bring new individuals into the organization. The hiring practices and continual professional development of new individuals into the organization will need further research to develop specific leadership skills and qualities. Administrators can continue to benefit from a laser focused approach to research that helps organizations understand levels of cultural competence.

### **Recommendation for Future Practice**

As the research with the Kellogg's Foundation continues to explore the impact of the Inclusion Model on a school district in the Southern part of the United States, more research will need to explore the various components that leader's experience when schools are changing demographics. Leadership in the Inclusion Model is constructed under three specific areas and as leadership continues to be studied using constructs from the Inclusion Model, there will be room to consider studying these new constructs. The leader's capacity to embed new individuals into the organization will need to begin at the very beginning of the relationship. Leadership will need to develop an emphasis of early understanding of cultural competency of individuals new to the organization. The early understanding will need to start at the interviewing of applicants and continue throughout the employee's first few months. The next section will discuss key components that are recommended for continuing research using terms for leadership studies.

This study will continue to build on the research of adaptive leadership as an essential function in schools that are experiencing changing demographics. The need for leaders to focus on their hiring practices and policies will need to be researched further as a key component to the leadership aspect of the Inclusion Model. Developing research based questions that give a sense of an applicant's cultural competence will need to be added for schools that are experiencing changing demographics. Depending on the design of the school district as to whether central office or the principal hires incoming candidates, there will need to be an emphasis the type of questions that will give specific clues and tips regarding a person's cultural competence. The questions that were used for this study have the potential to be adapted and researched to help administrators who are focused on hiring candidates that possess a natural capacity to value inclusion.

Research would need to continue to study the predictability of a candidate's desire for inclusion. Information on a candidate's ability will help principals better predict and plan for the type of professional development that the campus will need to assist all stakeholders on positive researched based inclusion practices.

### ***Conclusion***

Results from the present study continue to build on the research of effective leadership for principals in organizations that are experiencing changing demographics. In addition, findings from the present study provided continual refinements and validation of the Inclusion Model. The present study has added to the body of knowledge about how leaders continue to refine their practice in organizations that are

experiencing changing demographics. As schools continue to see an increase in a variety of demographics and socioeconomics, leaders will continue to need specialized training and professional development that is focused on meeting the needs of all stakeholders.

The present study contributes to the field of research on the Inclusion Model by providing insight into the practical means that leaders must adhere too

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